

# The Region

## Higher Density Projects Urged

Regional planners say such a strategy is needed to deal with growth issues.

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To help Southern California better cope with growth in the decades to come, regional planners Tuesday unveiled a strategy that calls for more high-density development in urban centers and near transportation corridors.

The long-term plan, which would affect less than 2% of the region's land, was touted by the Southern California Assn. of Governments as the best way to accommodate booming population and alleviate traffic congestion.

"The region is confronting serious problems," Port Hueneme Mayor Toni Young, second vice president of SCAG, said at a downtown Los Angeles news conference.

She praised the strategy as an "innovative solution to regional problems" that could "set a new course for Southern California's future."

The plan, called "Compass" because it is intended to guide local policymaking, makes the case that development and land use should be inextricably linked to transportation planning.

To develop the plan, SCAG staff members held 13 public "growth visioning" workshops attended by more than 1,300 people over the last 18 months.

SCAG is a planning consortium for a region encompassing Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Imperial counties. The group has no authority to implement its plans, so instead must persuade counties, cities and other government agencies to carry them out.

The group's forecasts show that from now until 2030, the region will grow by 6.3 million people, to a total population of 23 million. If nothing is done, traffic congestion in some places could double, according to SCAG.

The plan would promote transit-oriented development and foster pedestrian-friendly communities. It would also encourage more jobs near where people live.

To implement the plan, SCAG intends to collaborate with agencies such as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority as well as municipal governments and private developers, said Mark Pisano, executive director of SCAG.